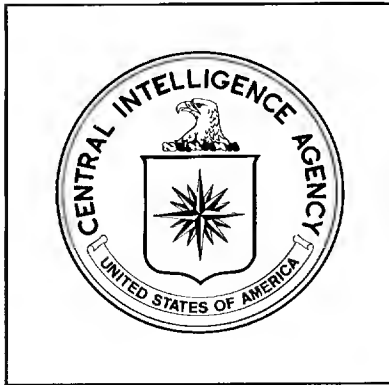


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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Some Thoughts on the Increased Likelihood of
Soviet Military Intervention in the Middle East

SNIE 30-1-75 *Next Steps in the Middle East* states that the likelihood of limited Soviet intervention is "now higher than during the October 1973 War, and would further increase as Arab battlefield fortunes waned, particularly if a decisive Israeli victory loomed or if Cairo or Damascus were threatened." This judgment apparently rests on two assumptions: that there is now heightened Arab and Israeli "intransigence" as compared to 1973 and that Moscow may perceive the US as being less likely to come down firmly on Israel's side.

Regarding the first assumption, intransigence may be higher than at most times over the past year, but certainly it is no greater than it was in the fall of 1973. On the contrary, it is possible to argue that the gap has been narrowed in the past 18 months.

In any case, the degree of intransigence is relevant to Moscow only insofar as it keeps the US from mediating the dispute on its own and brings the USSR into the picture, or makes further negotiations impossible. The first situation--essentially where we are today--does present Moscow with fresh opportunities, but not for armed intervention. Only the absence of negotiations followed by war begets this possibility.

Under the second assumption, the Soviets think the risks of intervention are now less than they were in 1973 because US support of Israel may be less steadfast than before. This rests on the shaky hypothesis that the Soviets are likely to confuse Washington's reassessment of its Israeli policy with a diminution of American interest or will in the Middle East. On the contrary, that reassessment may be viewed

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in Moscow as an indicator of Washington's increased stakes in the Middle East, and a logical consequence of the oil embargo. The Soviets may, therefore, conclude that the US would be *less* likely to view Soviet intervention with equanimity.

There is also the question of how the USSR will weigh the impact of events in Indo-China on future US behavior. The Soviets may calculate that the US, with increased sensitivity to the signals it is sending to the world, will be more--not less--willing to take a strong position if the Soviets were to intervene in the Middle East.

Finally, one must ask what, if any, lessons the Soviets have drawn from their experience of the past 18 months. On the one hand, it is possible that the Soviets have concluded that only their direct intervention on the ground will enable them to avoid a repetition of the post-October war syndrome. The Soviets may think that forceful action on behalf of the Arabs will solidify their position with their friends in the Arab world, win them new friends among former enemies, and once and for all expose the US as the foe of Arab interests.

On the other hand, the Soviets may think that the lesson of the post-October war period is that no matter how much the Soviets do for the Arabs--and in the Soviet view they did much in October--they are likely to be repaid with ingratitude. The Soviets may be less disposed than in 1973 to the idea that they have an obligation to save the Arabs from the consequences of their follies, particularly with respect to Egypt. Indeed, it is possible that as a consequence of their unhappy experience of the past 18 months the Soviets may believe that as long as Sadat is in power in Cairo, their policy in Egypt will be on unfirm footing. If this is true, Moscow could view an Israeli thrashing of Egypt as a good thing, and would be more disinclined than before to take major risks with their own forces in order to pull Sadat's chestnuts out of the fire.
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Romanian Nationalism:
On the Increase

Romanian treatment of the 30th anniversary of victory in World War II has taken on explicitly nationalistic and anti-Soviet overtones that are sure to arouse Moscow's ire.

Ceausescu fired the opening salvo in a speech on March 28 (*Staff Notes*, March 31). The full text is now available, and it reveals that Ceausescu branded attempts to under-value the role of the nation and to equate nationalism with anti-Communism as "cosmopolitanism." This charge will not sit well with the Kremlin; "cosmopolitanism" is the doctrinal opposite of nationalism and is used by Moscow to condemn the ideology and politics of the bourgeoisie.

Ceausescu added insult to injury by mocking "some comrades" (read, the Soviets) who turn to Marx, Engels, Lenin, and "even Stalin" for solutions to practical local problems that they had never addressed. Ceausescu added that "these comrades" had adopted policies damaging to Romania.

On March 30 the party newspaper took up the cudgels of nationalism by publishing a precedent-breaking discussion of a Romanian-Russian convention signed in April 1877. Bucharest deliberately used its interpretation of history to highlight current difficulties with Moscow and to imply that the Kremlin should follow the Tsarist example. The Imperial Russian Government, said the article, "obtained the right to move its army into the Balkans," while "respecting the rights of the Romanian state." Moreover, Russian Grand Duke Nikolai appealed to King Carol I to join the battle with the Turks, while keeping Romanian troops under national command. The commentary lauds Romanian resistance to attempts by

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"great neighboring empires" to "dismember" the Romanian nation, a clear reference, among other things, to Soviet acquisition of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina in 1940.

The Romanians have also published an article arguing that Moldavia was never under Turkish rule, thus implying that Bessarabia was never the Turks' to cede to Russia as they did in 1812.

The upsurge of nationalism reached its apex on April 2 with the announcement that celebrations of both the 1877 convention and the 375th anniversary of Romanian national hero Michael the Brave's short-lived unification of the country will coincide with VE day. Centering the celebrations on May 9 reflects Bucharest's resentment of Moscow's unwillingness to recognize Romania's military contribution during the final months of World War II. Army Chief-of-Staff Colonel-General Coman told the US ambassador on April 2 that the Romanians resent the reluctance of the Hungarians and "others"--again read the Soviets--to acknowledge the loss of 150,000 Romanian lives in the allied cause. Coman's remarks go far to explain the egregious self-serving character of an article in *Scinteia* on March 28 that recalled the gratitude of the friendly Hungarian people for "struggles waged by the Romanian army, alongside the Soviet army" in liberating Hungary.

The US embassy reports that some of its sources have indicated that preparations for the 1877 centenary are already under way. Given the current nationalistic binge, however, Ceausescu may reveal next month that the centenary celebrations will start two years early.

On balance, the tone and substance of articles and speeches in Bucharest strongly suggest that Ceausescu believes that his brand of national Communism will prove more attractive to Europeans than that of Moscow. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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SECRETKatushev-Pato Meeting

Pravda on March 28 published a bland announcement that K. F. Katushev, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, met with Otavio Pato, a member of the Portuguese Communist Party Central Committee Political Commission and Secretariat. The meeting, according to *Pravda*, was held in an "atmosphere of fraternal friendship," and the participants "exchanged information on matters of interest" to the two parties. V. S. Shaposhnikov, deputy chief of the CPSU International Department, took part in the meeting.

Despite *Pravda's* routine treatment, the meeting was highly unusual on at least two counts. The formula used to describe the meeting is traditionally reserved for meetings with parties from the bloc countries. In addition, Katushev is the party secretary responsible for relations with ruling communist parties; he does not meet with party delegations from outside the bloc. If protocol had been followed at the meeting with Pato, B. N. Ponomarev, party secretary and chief of the Central Committee department responsible for relations with non-ruling communist parties, would have met with the Portuguese delegation. Ponomarev's failure to meet with Pato may be explained by an embassy report, still unconfirmed, that he is on leave, but this would not explain the choice of Katushev as a substitute.

The Katushev-Pato meeting could indicate that the Soviets intend to recognize the PCP as a ruling party, but the risks inherent in conferring such status at this time make this an unlikely explanation. A plausible but highly speculative explanation for Katushev's role in the Pato talks is a reorganization of the Central Committee departments dealing with foreign affairs combining the Bloc and International Departments.

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K. V. Rusakov was last identified publicly as head of the Central Committee Bloc Department in November 1968. Since 1972 he has been identified as an adviser to Brezhnev. Recently acquired information on a seminar for Soviet foreign affairs specialists identified D. B. Rakhmanin as first deputy chief of the International Department. Previously he had been associated with the Bloc Department. Rusakov's transfer and Rakhmanin's new position, if true, would suggest that the two departments had been merged or, more unlikely, that the Bloc Department had been abolished.

Changes in the Central Committee apparatus were also rumored in 1973 when Petr Abrasimov, then ambassador to Paris, returned to Moscow to head an unidentified Central Committee department. His position was never firmly identified, but evidence suggests that he headed a department which probably included Cadres Abroad, the Exit Commission, and possibly functions from some other departments. Abrasimov's reassignment to East Germany in March raised questions about the organization of the Central Committee apparatus and may support a recent report that there will be a "new organization" within the Central Committee apparatus to redefine the departments' areas of responsibility. Whether the Central Committee departments have been reorganized is uncertain, but the apparatus is overdue for some adjustment as there are at least five departments without heads. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY/CONTROLLED DISSEM/WARNING: SENSITIVE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED)

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Soviet Commercial Visitor
Highlights During March

About 106 Soviets were authorized to enter the United States for commercial purposes during the month of March. The number is 20 percent lower than in February, but almost the same as that in March of last year. Highlighting the list of arrivals were two delegations headed by USSR ministers: A group of power specialists, led by the minister of heavy, power, and transport machine building, V. F. Zhigalin, visited several US firms--including Brown and Root, Westinghouse, and General Electric--to study the construction of atomic power stations. Minister of the gas industry, S. A. Orudzhev, was the leader of a second contingent, composed of gas turbine specialists. This group met with General Electric to discuss a contract under which GE would provide its gas turbine technology to the gas ministry.

Other significant visits included:

- Two specialists in chromium alloys, accompanied by a State Committee for Science and Technology official in charge of metallurgical exchanges, visited the Union Carbide Company.
- The RSFSR Minister of Light Industry, Yevgeniy Kondratkov, led a group of leather specialists for talks with the Tenneco Chemical Company, which may provide the USSR with the equipment for a synthetic leather plant.
- A group of pulp and paper administrators interested in US pulpstone manufacturing technology toured several US paper mills and discussed a pulpstone contract with the Norton Company. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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PUBLICATION OF INTEREST

USSR Council of Ministers, A(CR) 75-12, UNCLASSIFIED, March 1975. This updated wall chart includes members of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, heads of all-union and union republic ministries, chairmen of state committees and other agencies associated with the Council of Ministers, and chairmen of the republic councils of ministers. It supersedes A(CR) 74-34. Copies may be obtained from [REDACTED]

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